

NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE USSR

SOVIET EMBASSY, INFORMATION DEPARTMENT

1705 18TH STREET, N.W., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20009

TELEPHONE 232-8020

April 25, 1988

GORBACHEV--SHULTZ MEETING

Moscow. April 22. TASS. -- Mikhail Gorbachev received the Secretary of State of the United States, George Shultz on April 22. The main theme of their conversation was the forthcoming fourth Soviet-American summit, what its content should be and what atmosphere is needed for its success.

When beginning the conversation, Mikhail Gorbachev agreed with the Secretary of State's remark that it is important to listen not only to what people say when they are visiting but also to what they say when they are at home. From this point of view we in the Soviet Union could not but pay attention to the recent public statements by the U.S. President, "Gorbachev Said. "We would not want to think that we have exaggerated when we positively assessed the development of Soviet-American relations in recent times. This evaluation, as it seemed to us, is based on the assumption that both sides have started approaching each other more realistically, have begun to climb out of the prison of stereotypes and shed attempts to impose their views proceeding from one's interests alone," Mikhail Gorbachev said.

"But despite what was said and done only recently in Washington, sermons are again being delivered to us and we are being instructed on how we should behave ourselves. Our foreign policy is being assessed only negatively while the policy of the U.S. Administration is assessed only positively, Mikhail Gorbachev said. "Moreover, everything that has been achieved in Soviet-American relations is being ascribed to the policy of strength and 'putting pressure on the soviets.' Incidentally, this 'concept of strength' is also backed up by demonstrations of strength with respect to Nicaragua, Panama and the Persian Gulf.

"In these statements we again see a refusal to put up with political realities, and disregard for the interests of others, for the principle of the balance of interests," Mikhail Gorbachev went on.

"The question arises: How can this be explained and what is happening? We understand that an election campaign is under way and that there exist old ideological attachments. But after all there also exists responsibility to the world," he said.

"For us it is a reality that any administration will defend its country's interests' Mikhail Gorbachev went on. But it appears that these interests should reflect the will of the people. We are attentively following the sentiments of the American public and note with satisfaction that both Soviet people and Americans sincerely welcome signs of change for the better in relations between our countries. It turns out that on looking into the future many people in America not only do not want confrontation to remain but even reject the word 'rivalry.' The majority is for friendly relations," Mikhail Gorbachev said.

"So whose interests are mirrored by official statements counting on fundamental concessions by the USSR and actually justifying the arms race? And is it not here that we should look for the deceleration, the signs of which we observe time and again in the ongoing talks, including those connected with President Reagan's visit to Moscow?

"And will it really happen that the forthcoming visit by a U.S. President to the USSR after a 15-year interval and after as many as three meetings with the present Soviet leadership will be reduced to going again into the 'political ABC's'--to explanations about existing realities which it is dangerous to ignore.

"Today," Mikhail Gorbachev went on, "narrow pragmatism has become counterproductive. It fetters mentality, impedes a broad vision of the present-day world and realization of the fact that mankind has no future without respect for the free choice of every people. Without this the solution of concrete problems will constantly wind up in dead alleys. Without this there will be no genuine interaction between such powers as the USSR and the United States. That is why we keep repeating that Soviet-American relations are in need of a drastic restructuring. It is time to get rid of delusions that we are insisting on this because of 'weakness,' that, because the position of the present Soviet leadership is supposedly unstable, it is interested in some foreign policy success, and for this reason, is 'persuading'

the Americans to agree to cooperation. A real policy cannot be based on such absurdities. One can only miss the chance given by time to solve problems of world importance.

"In this context the subject of human rights was touched upon. "We should reach an understanding here at long last in terms of principles," Gorbachev said.

"Despite the fact that talks and other contacts on this topic have been lately acquiring a businesslike nature, the U.S. approach to it remains confrontational and geared to interference in our domestic affairs: We are confronted with demands, terms and grievances all the time.

"We have so far been showing restraint. But if we reciprocate--and we can do so over a very wide range of issues, the atmosphere in Soviet-American relations can become such as will make it no longer possible to solve any further issues.

"We should realize once and for all that the Soviet and American societies have different values, and should not attempt to foist our customs and our ideas of what is good and what is bad on each other.

"Each country has many problems of its own and let it take care of them in its own way. This does not rule out, but, on the contrary, presupposes, studies each other, cultural and scientific exchanges, etc. Let people take a look themselves and form their own judgement on everything.

"We are not going to re-educate the United States and do not recognize that it has any right to re-educate us."

The conversation covered also regional problems, including those connected with the Iran-Iraq war.

A high opinion was expressed of the Geneva accords on Afghanistan. "By now the USSR and the United States will act in the process of the Afghanistan settlement," Gorbachev said. "The whole world will judge the worth of Soviet-American relations as a factor for improvement in the international situation. It is very dangerous if either side succumbs to the temptation to act contrary to the principle that Afghanistan should be an independent, neutral, nonaligned nation."

The discussion covered the main issues that could come up at the forth-coming Moscow meeting of the General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party Central Committee and the U.S. President. It was noted that during the meeting between Eduard Shevardnadze

and George Shultz, and at the delegations' talks in Geneva, a large amount of work was handled. But problems remained.

"We still are for completing the possible documents by President Reagan's arrival in Moscow," Gorbachev said.

The negotiators agreed that the two countries should not limit themselves to what has already been achieved in Washington. The fourth summit can and should produce tangible results.

The program for the U.S. President's visit to the USSR in late May and early June was adopted in the main.

In conclusion, Gorbachev asked Shultz to tell the President that in Moscow it is hoped that the upcoming Soviet-American summit will be held in a spirit of mutual respect and on a realistic basis, mark another step forward and have concrete and weighty results. The U.S. President will find here a reception worthy of relations between two great peoples.

The meeting was attended by Eduard Shevardnadze, Anatoly Dobrynin, Sergei Akhromeyev, Alexander Bessmertnykh, Colin Powell, Rozanne Ridgway, Paul Nitze and Ambassadors Yuri Dubinin and Jack Matlock.

###